



the kingfisher

Quarterly magazine of the East Gippsland Landcare Network Inc.

Issue Landscape Fox Control a Success

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Cape Conran Weekend

Aboriginal Heritage Regulations



What is Landcare?

Landcare is a unique community driven organisation that strives to ‘do something practical’ about protecting and repairing our environment. All sorts of people take part in Landcare projects and activities – farmers, small landholders, schools and their students, professionals and visitors from Australia and around the world.

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hello

from the Landcare team

This time the hello from the team is a farewell; sadly, Peter Reefman is leaving the East Gippsland Landcare Network staff team...

“It is with mixed feelings that I bid you a fond farewell. I was sad not to have managed to nail the equivalent role in the transition to the EGCMMA, but this also (if only for the time being) allows me to get a whole backlog of tasks done that I’ve been unable to complete while holding down a full-time job.

I wish to thank the many of you that I’ve come to know/ know better through this role, for your welcoming attitude and your forgiveness during my inevitable learning-curve glitches. I especially thank Nat & Paul for the assistance they have given and the perseverance they have shown. I’ll still be around a bit, as I will remain a Flaggy Creek Landcare member, and, if possible, go back onto the TopSoils program. So let’s make this an “au revoir” rather than a farewell!”

Peter Reefman

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Cover photo: Stinking star fungus - Paul Harvey. Photos by Landcare staff unless otherwise stated.

Do you want a free customised Landcare video?



Would you or your Landcare group like a free, professional video to raise awareness of the fantastic work you're doing to care for our land and water resources?

Landcare Australia has created "Landcare Video Storytellers".

Simply follow the step by step guide on the website (address below) and Landcare Australia will create a free 40 second professional video clip* that will help you tell your very own Landcare story.

*All footage/images need to be provided by the individual/group submitting the video.

GO TO: www.landcareaustralia.org.au/about-landcare-video-storytellers/

Honey bee



East Gippsland Regional Landcare Calendar 2019 - Theme: Pollinators

The East Gippsland Regional Landcare team develop a calendar each year that focuses on images from our region.

The calendar also contains useful information about when groups are meeting, when to treat some pest plants and animals, and other general information relevant to Landcarers.

Each year we ask the community to contribute photographs for the calendar and we are always in awe of the quality of the pictures that we receive.

This year the theme is Pollinators; so get out there with your cameras and capture those good bugs, bees, birds and mammals that provide us with pollination services. You get the picture?

The photographs need to be landscape, electronic and a minimum of 300 dpi. Please provide details of who took the picture, where it was taken, a paragraph about it and if you are from a Landcare Group, which one. Closing date for photos is 30th September 2018.

For more information and to email your contributions please contact Far East Landcare Facilitator Penny Gray at the Orbost Landcare Office on 5161 1365 or 0429 142 225 penny.gray@fevl.org.au

Fox Control

Landscape
a Success

In 2017 Trust for Nature and the East Gippsland Landcare Network trialed a combined approach to landscape fox control at Blond Bay State Game Reserve and surrounding freehold land.

This approach comprised of a baiting program at Blond Bay State Game Reserve and landholders undertaking baiting and shooting through an incentive program on the surrounding farmland.

The results have been very encouraging and has demonstrated that this cross-tenure approach is an effective way of undertaking landscape fox control.

Trust for Nature Project Manager, Robyn Edwards explained that pre and post fox control surveys were conducted in order to assess the impact of the control program on the fox population.

“The results of these surveys showed a 65 % reduction in the fox population across the project area, which is a dramatic reduction in the fox population”

“Over the 10 months that the control program ran nearly 200 foxes were removed through either baiting or shooting (assuming that 1 bait taken = 1 dead fox)”.

“Foxes wreak havoc amongst nesting shorebirds and resting migratory birds so by reducing the number of foxes we are giving these birds a much better chance of survival”.

Robyn added that, “We were very surprised at the high number of foxes found – on average you could expect to see almost four foxes for every kilometer – this was much higher than expected”.

Blond Bay was chosen as the focus area for the program because it provides significant habitat for water birds due to the presence of wetlands, lake frontage and high-quality vegetation communities. It is the largest lake frontage reserve between Lakes Entrance and the Perry River on the Gippsland Plains so provides much needed habitat in an area that has been largely cleared and wetlands drained.

The freehold land around the reserve was included in the project area to limit the rate of foxes recolonizing the Reserve. Some follow-up work



Pied
Oystercatcher

Royal
Spoonbill



during May-June 2018 in the freehold fringing area has resulted in a significant number of foxes being sighted and shot, clearly indicating a need to maintain an integrated control program.

Foxes are an introduced predator that take a massive toll on native and migratory water birds of the Gippsland Lakes. The fox is listed in the World Conservation Union's list of the 100 worst invasive species.

The economic impact of foxes in Australia has been estimated at around \$227.5 million per year. This includes \$17.5 million in sheep production losses, \$190 million in environmental impacts and \$16 million in management costs. According to agriculture Victoria, any large-scale reduction in fox numbers could create significant environmental and economic benefit.

“Some of the animals found in the Blond Bay area include the vulnerable Latham Snipe and Greenshank, Lace Monitors, Emus and Possums. Some of the migratory birds are flying from as far away as Japan and Siberia. It's devastating to think that they can survive such an amazing trip only to be decimated by foxes once they reach the Gippsland Lakes,” continued Ms Edwards.

This project was funded by the Victorian State Government for the Health of the Gippsland Lakes.

Article and photographs supplied by Trust for Nature.



Inset photo - Tessa Skilton and Robert Wilson, Trust for Nature project officers, establishing the bait stations at Blond Bay Reserve

Main photo - Project Partners





African
lovegrass
seedhead

“ALIEN INVASION”

.... at the East Gippsland Field Days

Feral Animals and Weeds were the feature at this year’s East Gippsland Field Days.

Organised by East Gippsland Landcare Networks (EGLN) “Pests/Plants/Animals sub-committee”, together with volunteers from Nicholson, Flaggy Creek, Lower Tambo, Picnic Point and Clifton Creek Landcare Groups the two day event proved successful. Administrative support from EGLN staff was much appreciated. The educational event resulted from a successful grant application undertaken by staff.

The event held in two large marquees provided an ideal venue for a variety of guest presenters. Topics included “War on Weeds” (Matt Stephenson), “Roadside Weeds” (Lester Wharfe), “The Deer Conundrum” (Tom Crook), and “Kalimna Rain Forest Restoration” (Tom Crook).

Deer proved to be a drawcard as so many landholders and motorists are currently facing great difficulties with huge deer populations prevalent in many East Gippsland areas. There

have been many reports of motorists colliding with deer; the prevalence of huge Sambar Deer on our roads has become a major road safety issue which requires urgent attention. Farmers experiencing hard times due to extremely dry conditions are also finding that deer are competing for food with some farmers reporting regular sightings of 35 or more deer on their properties. Trees also suffer with the presence of deer.

Visitors to presentations were greeted by “Sid the Sambar” who greeted all from his vantage point amongst the gum leaves. Sid was kindly on loan for the Field Days by a local Grain Store supplier and found to be a very popular asset with some people asking if he was available to hire! Sid had a story to tell and he certainly created much interest.



Event organisers Ken Stuart and Marion Dawson with Landcare President Rose Maher (centre)



Sambar Sid & his message

The Deer
Conundrum
presentation
by Tom Crook



Large numbers of Carp in Gippsland Rivers is also problematic and of great concern to anglers in the region. Visitors were very eager to learn more about this pest.

“The Carp Herpesvirus – and how it can help control Carp in Gippsland” presented by Craig Ingram, Victorian Fisheries, highlighted the difficulties in dealing with Carp and possible ways of overcoming the matter. School groups were very happy recipients of free caps and drink bottles.

Rabbit Control was the focus in the adjacent marquee with Rob Irvine and his team providing a very informative display of rabbit control methods. The use of the smoker was demonstrated using a very innovative warren set up on a trestle. The use of the K5 Virus as another method of

rabbit management was explained. This could be part of the approach to rabbit management, however it requires an integrated approach with a combination of methods often being used to suit the circumstances. Technology can also play a part; with some visitors interested in the use of the Pestsmart App. as a monitoring and recording tool.

Many people were interested in learning more about managing Rabbits on their properties.

Information show bags were offered to those who attended. Pictorial displays were featured in both marquees. Much time and effort was given to ensuring that a wide variety of information was available on Feral Pests, Weeds, and “garden escapees”. “What to Plant instead” proved a popular and informative give-away.

The display of Wild Dog footprints on loan from a local expert and associated Wild Dog literature created much interest.

While visitation numbers were not as high as previous years those who did attend over the two days were very pleased with the presentations and information on offer.

Organisers greatly valued the assistance of volunteers from the various Landcare Groups, without their help holding such an event would not be possible.

Article and photographs supplied by East Gippsland Landcare Network’s Pest Plant and Animal Sub Committee.

European
carp - VFA



Rob Irvine
– Rabbit
management
methods



Gippsland Lakes Care Groups -

Funded by the Victorian State Government for the Gippsland Lakes, The Gippsland Lakes Care Groups- Linking People, Land and Lakes project is a cross tenure and multi partner project utilising the Care Group network to collaboratively deliver on-ground works which protect and enhance the biodiversity of wetlands and riparian zones fringing the Gippsland Lakes.

The regions wetlands and riparian zones are a priority for protection and enhancement because they form a nationally significant habitat hot spot. The Gippsland Lakes contain eleven Ramsar wetland habitat types ranging from freshwater marsh environments to coastal lagoons and saltmarsh. This habitat diversity supports a wide range of plants and animals including endangered species such as the Growling Grass frog and the Green and Golden Bell frog.

As part of the project, Care Group partners have worked collaboratively to deliver environmental works that have enhanced the biodiversity of the Gippsland Lakes, through wetland and riparian on ground works, community engagement and education.

Project coordinator Natalie Jenkins from the East Gippsland Landcare Network said “The project provided a fantastic opportunity for Care Group partners Landcare, Trust for Nature, Greening Australia, the Gippsland Plains & East Gippsland Rainforest Conservation Management

Networks, Bird Life and Fishcare to work together. It provides an avenue to share expertise and deliver coordinated on-ground works, community engagement and education that directly benefit the habitats and species of the Gippsland Lakes”

Specifically, the project focused on reducing damage by stock, managing weeds, hydrology management, revegetation, management planning, wetland condition assessments and engaging with the community to raise awareness, knowledge and skill base.

The Gippsland Lakes are culturally and socially important to the local community and this was reflected by community interest in being involved in the project and for this reason project achievements exceeded expectation.

Trust for Nature, Landcare and Greening Australia worked with private landholders to remove stock from four wetlands totalling 277 ha. The wetlands are located at Heart Morass, the Perry River and along McLennan Strait, all of which are significant wetlands that fringe Lake Wellington and possess multiple cultural, social and environmental values. Additionally, the East Gippsland Rainforest CMN protected two gullies, Mississippi and Maringa Creeks which drain into North Arm and Reeves Channel. Protecting these wetlands and waterways has contributed to increasing water quality and natural regeneration while reducing impacts such as sedimentation, pugging, erosion and weed spread. The increase in regeneration of native plants and



Far left:
Stock pugging
at Heart
Morass, Sale
before Trust
for Nature
erected a fence
to mitigate
damage

Left:
Rainforest
Restoration
site, Kalimna
looking south

Linking People, Land and Lakes

freshwater availability will improve ecological health and habitat for water birds and species such as the Growling Grass frog and the Green and Golden Bell Frog.

Revegetation and weed control activities were undertaken across 25 ha and 21.5 ha respectively and have contributed to increasing native plant species richness and plant cover abundance around the lower reaches of Toms Creek, North Arm, Reeves Channel and the Perry River. Thus, improving the extent and quality of fringing vegetation which will also reduce sedimentation and increase the area of habitat providing safe refuge for feeding, shelter and breeding for water birds and all native fauna species around the Gippsland Lakes.

In addition to on-ground works a key component of the project has been for Care Group partners to promote awareness and encourage community participation.

Over 80 people attended field days where they got to learn about the work that is being undertaken in a hands-on fashion including a frog field day and a wildflower and orchid hunt, both of which helped to highlight the importance of a healthy catchment.

In addition to learning opportunities for the community the project has also provided training opportunities for local professionals. Trust for Nature hosted 14 representatives from partner agencies and groups for a two day Index of Wetland Condition training workshop delivered by the Arthur Rylah institute.

Article and photographs supplied by project partners.



Gunaikurnai planting crew takes a well earned break on a project site



Bird Survey volunteers





Making new friends at the

Cape Conran Weekend

At the start of May, a group of 22 Landcarers got together to share a low-key, family-friendly weekend at Cape Conran.

It was a wild, wuthering start to the weekend as a storm front rolled through with unnervingly high winds. The storm dropped 25mm of rain overnight with temperatures plummeting rapidly, while some of the attendees listened nervously to the cabins creaking in the wind. However, the night passed without drama.

On Saturday, the plucky group braved the tail end of the storm to walk around Yeerung River, finishing the walk along the beach and getting a good sand-blasting for their trouble. The Yeering Estuary walk (starting at the car park, heading back up the track, crossing the river over the bridge, and then following the eastern bank trail before cutting across the beach back up to the car park) is a gem, and only takes an hour or so. It goes through several very different plant communities, including some very dramatic looking ghania thickets, with swamp sections plus tree ferns, and is highly recommended whatever the time of year.

Several people also headed off in the afternoon to Yeerung Gorge, which is reached by following a trail from a car park on the Yeerung River Gorge

Road. The river contains a beautiful gallery rainforest section, which was, sadly, looking the worse for wear owing to the lack of rain. Sunshine Wattle *acacia terminalis* was in flower, giving a splash of bright yellow to the lowland forest on the walk down to the gorge.

At night, everyone congregated in the main lodge for pizzas, hot chocolate and red wine before heading back out excitedly after yours truly spotted a feathertail glider feeding in a nearby banksia. Whilst not all the group spotted the little feller before he disappeared, everyone got a good look at one that another member of the party, Greg Fyfe, had found in his cabin's kitchen. Greg, being a qualified wildlife handler, picked up the glider and let everyone get a good look before releasing it outside. It was a feisty little thing and gave Greg a good nibbling.

After a much more peaceful night, the group explored the Firetrail Track on Sunday morning. This cuts through some excellent banksia woodland before arriving on the beach, where the kids had a great time combing the sand for the weird and wonderful things that had washed up (see photographs).

Written and photographs by Paul Harvey



Above main: Windswept Yeerung beach

Small from top: Spider hole

Sealife washed ashore by the storm

Brain anemone *Phylctenactis bexanoos*

Coastal Greenhood orchid

Feathertail glider



10



Far left: It wasn't calm...

Left: A Bear Grylls moment

Site of
cultural
significance



Changes to the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations

The *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* was amended in 2016, following these reforms the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007* has also been amended.

The *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018* will commence on 23 May 2018, and will replace the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007*. Information about the new Regulations, including the Regulatory Impact Statement and the Review of the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007* can be found on the Aboriginal Victoria's website (www.vic.gov.au/aboriginalvictoria). Principally, the Regulations define high impact activities and areas of cultural heritage sensitivity. Where a high impact activity is proposed in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, a cultural heritage management plan must be prepared to assess the likelihood of, and manage harm to, any Aboriginal cultural heritage in the activity area.

The new Regulations are substantially similar to the former *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007* with some key changes. These include:

- nature conservation reserves defined under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* are areas of cultural heritage sensitivity
- the definition of 'waterway' explicitly includes channelised sections of named waterways

- areas of cultural heritage sensitivity related to geological formations are more accurately mapped by relying on the recently published *Surface Geology of Victoria 1:250,000* map book
- the listed high impact activities include residential buildings (such as residential hotels and hostels) and residential villages
- the prescribed fees more accurately compensate the decision maker for expenses in carrying out prescribed functions which incur a fee.

Other changes include the addition of strategic fuel breaks as a high impact activity, and an increase to the length of walking and bicycle tracks that require a cultural heritage management plan. Aboriginal Victoria's guides, forms and practice notes will be updated to account for the changes in the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018*, as will the indicative mapping of cultural heritage sensitivity on the Aboriginal cultural heritage register and information system (ACHRIS) and the online map.

Kangaroo Pet Food Trial

Kangaroos are protected in Victoria, however, there are situations where kangaroos can cause damage that negatively impact on landholders, regional communities and biodiversity. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) issues Authority to Control Wildlife (ATCWs) under the *Wildlife Act 1975* for the control of kangaroos where impacts can be demonstrated. While these authorities allow for personal use of the meat and bones, the majority are buried or left to decompose.

The Victorian Government commenced the Kangaroo Pet Food Trial (KPFT) in March 2014 to allow the use of kangaroo carcasses resulting from authorised control activities to be processed commercially for pet food. The trial was extended until March 2018 to test its sustainability over a longer period and to expand the geographic area of the trial and following an evaluation of the trial in 2017, it has been extended again. The trial will now continue until 31 March 2019 in 16 local government areas located in the

western and northern parts of Victoria. These areas were originally chosen because of historic data on the control of kangaroos.

The trial does not change the requirement for a landholder applying for an ATCW to demonstrate that kangaroos are causing property damage and wherever possible, DELWP advocates non-lethal management of kangaroos. Furthermore, the trial was not implemented for the purposes of population control and kangaroos are not harvested under the trial specifically for pet food.

The extension of the trial to 31 March 2019 will allow time to assess whether kangaroo management activities under ATCWs and the trial are impacting on the health and sustainability of Victoria's kangaroo populations, and to see whether changes to compliance, monitoring and education will address the issues that arose.

More information on the trial can be found on <https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/our-wildlife/kangaroos/kangaroo-pet-food-trial>

Membership form

Want to join Landcare?

Please complete this form and return to:
East Gippsland Landcare Network Inc.
PO Box 1498
Bairnsdale 3875

Note: If sending a cheque, please make it out to your choice of Landcare Group - as listed below

Surname name (s)		
First name (s)		
Mailing address		
Phone no.		Mobile no.
Email		
Property address (If different to mailing address)		
Signature		
Membership type	<input type="checkbox"/> Family <input type="checkbox"/> Individual	

Note: For insurance purposes, all members of a family membership must be listed.

Which group would you like to be a member of?

(subject to accepting the aims and philosophies of the group)

Please tick box

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bairnsdale Urban \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Flaggy Creek \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Nungurner \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bengworden \$22.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends of Picnic Point \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Paynesville \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bruthen \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends of Upper Nicholson Catchment \$10.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Raymond Island \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buchan \$16.50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Gelantipy \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Romawi \$25.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clifton Creek \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Glenaladale \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Swifts Creek/Ensay \$11.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dargo \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Lakes Entrance Community \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Tambo Bluff \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eagle Point \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Lower Tambo \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Timbarra \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastwood \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Nicholson River \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Toms Creek \$20.00 |